



June 7, 2006

Press Release

ICE DOCUMENT AND BENEFIT FRAUD TASK FORCE ANNOUNCES ARRESTS ON CHARGES OF USING SHAM MARRIAGES TO OBTAIN IMMIGRATION DOCUMENTS

MICHAEL J. GARCIA, United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, MARTIN D. FICKE, Special Agent-in-Charge of the New York Office of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), and MARK J. MERSHON, Assistant Director-in-Charge of the New York Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), announced the arrests of defendants today on charges relating to an immigration document fraud scheme involving sham marriages that netted more than one million dollars in illegal proceeds.

According to the thirteen-count Indictment unsealed today in Manhattan federal court, BEVERLY MOZER-BROWNE conspired with her brother, PHILLIP A. BROWNE, who was employed by the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS), formerly known as Immigration and Naturalization Services (INS), to fraudulently provide permanent residence documents, or "green cards," in exchange for fees ranging from \$8,000 to \$16,000. MOZER-BROWNE, as alleged in the Indictment, owned and operated a business in Queens, New York, called Help Preparers Professional Services (HPPS) that purported to offer its customers assistance in a variety of financial and legal matters. In fact, it is charged, the primary business at HPPS was providing fraudulent green cards.

Persons seeking fraudulent green cards from HPPS were provided marriage documentation in one of two ways by MOZER-BROWNE and her employees, as charged in the Indictment. One way was that MOZER-BROWNE and her co-conspirators paid United States citizens to enter into sham marriages with HPPS applicants. A second way was that MOZER-BROWNE and her co-conspirators produced phony documentation indicating that a marriage to a United States citizen occurred in the past.

Once the HPPS applicant had documentation of marriage to a United States citizen, as charged in the Indictment, HPPS employees prepared a green card application package, including supporting documents such as a fraudulent birth certificate and fictitious letters from employers and banks, and mailed the application to USCIS. Then the HPPS applicant received an appointment for an interview with USCIS. According to the Indictment, MOZER-BROWNE'S brother, BROWNE, as a District Adjudication Officer for USCIS, approved the applications without requiring the HPPS applicant to appear for the interview. BROWNE generated a form and a green card was issued to the HPPS applicant.

From April 2001 until November 2005, MOZER-BROWNE, BROWNE, and their co-conspirators allegedly provided hundreds of fraudulent green cards to HPPS applicants and received more than one million dollars

in proceeds. MOZER-BROWNE, BROWNE, and two of their coconspirators are charged with laundering the illegal proceeds by making large cash deposits of the fraud proceeds into accounts at various banks, usually in amounts smaller than \$10,000. In addition to dividing the proceeds among different bank accounts, MOZER-BROWNE and her co-conspirators concealed the proceeds by purchasing several properties, most in Florida and one in Pocono Township, Pennsylvania, that were held in various straw purchasers' names, according to the Indictment.

The Indictment charges 30 defendants. Thirteen of MOZER-BROWNE and BROWNE's co-defendants worked for MOZER-BROWNE at HPPS. Two codefendants allegedly helped MOZER-BROWNE and HPPS find United States citizens willing to enter sham marriages. Two other codefendants were United States citizens who allegedly entered into sham marriages in exchange for payment. The remaining 11 defendants, according to the Indictment, fraudulently obtained green cards by submitting forged marriage certificates and phony financial information, as arranged by MOZER-BROWNE and HPPS.

The Indictment contains forfeiture allegations that seek from the defendants at least one million dollars as well as the forfeiture of seven properties based on the amount of proceeds of the fraud.

The money laundering charges carry a maximum sentence of twenty years in prison, and the visa fraud charges carry a maximum sentence of ten years in prison. The defendants are scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in federal court in Manhattan, Florida, and North Carolina. A listing of defendants' names, hometowns, and ages is included in an attached document.

Also involved in the investigation were ICE's Office of Professional Responsibility, the Department of Homeland Security Inspector General RICHARD L. SKINNER and his office.

Assistant United States Attorney JACOB BUCHDAHL is in charge of the prosecution. Assistant United States Attorney CHRISTIN ABISCHOFF is in charge of the forfeiture allegations.

Charges contained in the Indictment are merely accusations and defendants are innocent unless and until proven guilty.

Defendants' Background Information

Beverly MOZER-BROWNE, Female, age 49, Brooklyn, NY & Kissimmee, FL

Phillip BROWNE, Male, age 40, Kissimmee, FL & Brooklyn, NY

Sandford BROWNE (AKA Tyson), Male, age 42, Kissimmee, FL

Gerrarda BROWNE, (AKA Gerry), Female, age 36, Kissimmee, FL

Williana BROWNE, Female, age 39, Kissimmee, FL

John LOFTON (AKA Big John), Male, age 53, Bronx, NY

Peter ABSOLAM (AKA Lloyd), Male, age 58, Amityville, NY

Keith MAHASE, Male, age 39, South Richmond Hill, NY

Abdul Hakim MUHAMMAD, Male, age 54, Brooklyn, NY

Tiffany WAYMAN, Female, age 29, Manhattan, NY

Narrisa MOHAMMED AKA: Narrisa JEREMIAH, Female, age 27, Ozone Park, NY

Jamsheed JEREMIAH (AKA Jason), Male, age 29, Ozone Park, NY

Khadiga CLARKE (AKA Kelly), Female, age 31, Brooklyn, NY

Lennard H. PRESCOD (AKA Bob), Male, age 44, Ridgewood, NY

Makeba ISAROON, Female, age 24, Bronx, NY Rhonda EATON, Female, age 39, Bronx, NY

Roderick K. CHASSEAU, Male, age 39, Burlington, NC

Cameron A. LLOYD, Male, age 55, Bronx, NY

Kwasi DRAKES, Female, age 24, Brooklyn, NY

Narine JAIRAM, Male, age 44, South Ozone Park, NY, originally from Guyana

Cherylene RAMDASS, Female, age 34, South Richmond Hill, NY, originally from Trinidad and Tobago

Tulsi RAMRUP, Male, age 50, Jersey City, NJ, originally from Guyana

Natasha HERCULES, Female, age 25, Brooklyn, NY, originally from Trinidad and Tobago

Anneka RAMPERSAD, Female, age 30, Plainsboro, NJ, originally from Trinidad and Tobago

Tasleem KUDRATH, Male, age 21, South Richmond Hill, NY, originally from Trinidad and Tobago

Mervin TRANCOSO, Male, age 37, Brooklyn, NY, originally from Trinidad and Tobago

Adrian GOURSAHAB, Male, age 29, Jamaica, NY, originally from Trinidad and Tobago

Nigel DEFOUR, Male, age 41, Brooklyn, NY, originally from Trinidad and Tobago

Wendy HARRISON, Female, age 47, Staten Island, NY, originally from Trinidad and Tobago

Kerry RAMPERSAD, Male, age 32, South Richmond Hill, NY, originally from Trinidad and Tobago

ICE

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.